Introduction of Sampark Kranti to Manikpur

1713. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Chitrakoot on the border States of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh is at present directly connected by only one train *i.e.* Mahakaushal Express though it is visited by a large number of pillgrims almost throughout the year; and

(b) if so, the positive date by when the proposed Sampark Kranti from Hazrat Nizamuddin to Manikpur via Chitrakoot is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAIL WAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Chitrakutdham Karwi is presently served by 10 pairs of trains.

(b) The train will be introduced during 2004-2005.

Extension of Electric B.G. Line

1714. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a dire necessity and priority to extend the Electric B.G. Line from Villupuram to Trichy in the Chennai - Villupuram-Trichy-Madurai-Nagercoil Section in the wake of growing passenger traffic;

(b) what is the present status of the proposal which was submitted several months back by CORE (Central Organisation for Railway Electrification) to the Zonal authorities; and

(c) by when this proposal will be cleared and taken up for execution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAIL WAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) No, Sir. Electrification of railway tracks is a need based exercise which is reviewed on a continuous basis. Due to relative priority for electrification of other high density routes, extension of electrification from Villupuram to Trichy rail line is not being considered at present.